

Introduced by Senator Speier

May 17, 2005

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 49—Relative to medication errors.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 49, as introduced, Speier. Medication errors panel.

This measure would create a panel to study the causes of medication errors and recommend changes in the health care system that would reduce the number of errors associated with the delivery of prescription and over-the-counter medication to consumers. The measure would require the panel to convene by October 1, 2005, and to submit to the Senate Committee on Health a preliminary report by March 1, 2006, and a final by report by June 1, 2006.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Medication errors annually claim the lives of
2 over 100,000 Americans and another two million persons have
3 nonfatal reactions that require medical attention, according to a
4 recently published study; and
5 WHEREAS, Up to one-half of all medications are taken
6 incorrectly or mixed with other medications that cause dangerous
7 reactions which can lead to injury and death; and
8 WHEREAS, Medication errors occur in all settings in which
9 prescription drug products are prescribed, dispensed, furnished,
10 ordered, or otherwise provided; and
11 WHEREAS, The current system of providing medications to
12 patients is rapidly evolving due to changes in health delivery and
13 payer policies; and

1 WHEREAS, The number of available medicines approved by
2 the federal Food and Drug Administration is increasing; and

3 WHEREAS, Many factors contribute to a poor understanding
4 by many consumers and patients about their prescriptions,
5 including frequent switching of generic brands that are each
6 different colors and shapes so that the same drug looks different
7 and confuses the patient making it hard to easily spot mistakes;
8 overworked pharmacists; reduced time with physicians for
9 patients to be given important drug information; patients seeing
10 multiple physicians that may be unaware of each other's care
11 plans; patients often using vitamins, herbs, and over-the-counter
12 drugs that can react with the medications they take and that both
13 the physician and pharmacist do not know about; and

14 WHEREAS, Research has demonstrated that improved
15 communication between patients and their health professionals is
16 the most effective means of reducing errors and drug
17 misadventures and improving health care outcomes; now,
18 therefore, be it

19 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
20 *thereof concurring*, That a special panel be formed to study
21 causes of medication errors; and be it further

22 *Resolved*, That the Chair of the Senate Committee on Health
23 shall convene the panel no later than October 1, 2005; and be it
24 further

25 *Resolved*, That the panel shall recommend improvements,
26 additions, or changes to be constructed and implemented for the
27 significant improvement of the health care system by reducing
28 errors associated with the delivery of prescription and
29 over-the-counter medications to consumers and shall seek
30 support from foundations or other sources; and be it further

31 *Resolved*, That the panel membership shall consist of
32 appointees of the Senate Committee on Health, the Assembly
33 Committee on Health, and the Assembly Committee on
34 Insurance; and be it further

35 *Resolved*, That the Speaker of the Assembly shall appoint to
36 the panel a member of the faculty of a school of pharmacy, a
37 representative of the California Pharmacists Association, a
38 representative of the California Association of Health Plans, a
39 representative of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers
40 of America, a member of the California Medical Association, a

1 member or representative of the Assembly Republican Caucus,
2 and a consumer representative; and be it further

3 *Resolved*, That the Senate Committee on Rules shall appoint to
4 the panel a representative of the California Retailers Association
5 Chain Drug Committee, a member of the California Society of
6 Hospital Pharmacists, a representative of a public health
7 organization, a member of the California Nurses Association, a
8 representative of the American Association of Retired People,
9 and a member or representative of the Senate Republican
10 Caucus; and be it further

11 *Resolved*, That the panel shall submit to the Senate Committee
12 on Health a preliminary report of its conclusions and
13 recommendations by March 1, 2006, and a final report of its
14 conclusions and recommendations no later than June 1, 2006;
15 and be it further

16 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
17 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.